

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06

CCO-00 MCT-01 SSM-03 IO-13 AID-05 TRSE-00 /099 W
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O P 151444Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1778

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 099

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

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CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 7474

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION SEPTEMBER 15

REF: BEIRUT 7444

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1. SUMMARY. EXPECTED LEBANOESE/SYRIAN/PALESTINIAN MEETING

RAISES SOME HOPES, AS SARKIS EMERGES AS WIDELY-ACCEPTABLE LEBANESE REPRESENTATIVE. SARKIS ALSO SAID DUE IN CAIRO AS POLITICAL SHUTTLES CONTINUE. PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE MEETS. LAA'S KHATIB TRIES PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY TO SECURE POSITION AS REPORTS OF LAA DISINTEGRATION CONTINUE. JUNBLATT LETS GRAND MUFTI CARRY HIS VIEWS TO DAMASCUS AND MAY YET VISIT CAIRO BEFORE SEP 23. GROUND SITUATION CALM EXCEPT FOR SCATTERED CLASHES AND SPORADIC SHELLINGS. SOUTHERN VILLAGERS INCREASE OPPOSITION TO PALESTINIANS. REPORTS OF ISRAELI ARMS SUPPLY TO CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH AND IN METN. END SUMMARY.

2. TRIPARTITE MEETING. AL-SPONSORED LEBANESE/SYRIAN/PALESTINIAN MEETING GENERALLY EXPECTED IN CHTAURA SEP 15 OR 16, ALTHOUGH AL MOHARRIR SAYS NOT UNTIL WEEKEND OR AFTER SARKIS INVESTITURE. MODERATE PALESTINIANS HAPPY WITH SELECTION OF KHLEYFAWI AND SARKIS AS ARAFAT INTERLOCUTORS. L' ORIENT LE JOUR SAYS ARAFAT WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY YASSER ABD RABBO (PDFLP), TALAL NAGI (PDFLP-GC) AND ABDEL JAWAD SALAH (NATIONAL PALESTINIAN FRONT). L'ORIENT SAYS REJECTIONIST FRONT AGREES TO MEETING, BUT FRONT ITSELF, ACCORDING TO AN NAHAR, DENIES IT HAS AGREED MEET WITH SYRIANS. JUNBLATT AGREEABLE TO MEETING BUT ON CONDITION THAT AL FORCES FORM SECURITY COMMITTEES AND INTERPOSE THEMSELVES BETWEEN SYRIANS AND PALESTINIAN/LEFTISTS AND THAT SYRIANS WITHDRAW FROM SOFAR, JEZZINE AND NORTH. JUNBLATT HAS THUS REVIVED OLD CANARD OF PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL. HASSAN SABRI KHOLI, WHO ARRIVED BEIRUT SEP 14, APPEARS HAVE TASK OF CONVINCING LEBANESE FRONT TO ACCEPT SARKIS AS LEBANESE REPRESENTATIVE AND CAUTIOUSLY TELLS PRESS TRIPARTITE MEETING IS STILL ONLY PROJECT UNDER DISCUSSION. AL MUHARRIR SAYS KFOUR FRONT HAS APPROVED PROPOSAL, BUT KATAEB POLITBURO MEMBER KARIM PAKRADOUNI SAYS LEBANESE FRONT KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT TRIPARTITE MEETING, ONLY OF UPCOMING SYRIAN/PALESTINIAN MEETINGS. WE UNDERSTAND ARAFAT HAS DESIGNATED FATAH HARDLINERS ABU IYAD AND ABU SALAH AS NEGOTIATORS AT FUTURE PALESTINIAN/SYRIAN CONFERENCES. MOVE MAY REFLECT ARAFAT'S DESIRE TO HOLD TWO EXTREMISTS RESPONSIBLE IF NEGOTIATIONS FAIL OR, IF CONFIDENTIAL

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THEY SUCCEED, TO FORCE THEM INTO MORE MODERATE CAMP. SARKIS, ACCORDING TO AL MOHARRIR, PREFERS TO POSTPONE MEETING UNTIL ALL PARTIES AGREE.

3. CAIRO. PRESS QUOTES EGYPTIAN FM FAHMI'S SURPRISE STATEMENT THAT SARKIS DUE IN CAIRO SEP 18. AN NAHAR SAYS JUNBLATT NOW PREPARED VISIT CAIRO BEFORE SEP 23. WE UNDERSTAND JUNBLATT TOLD EGYPTIAN CHARGE HE WOULD

SUPPORT EGYPTIAN PEACE INITIATIVES. PIERRE GEMAYEL CONFERRED SEP 14 IN DAMASCUS WITH ASSAD BEFORE GOING ON TO CAIRO WHERE HE MET BY FAHMY AT HEAD OF THREE MEMBER KATAEB DELEGATION, ACCOMPANIED BY COL. MOHAMMED KHOLI, ASSAD ENVOY. GEMAYEL EXPECTED MEET SADAT SEP 15. PRESS SPECULATES ON POSSIBLE SADAT/ASSAD MEETING. SAEB SALAM MET PM KHLEYFAWI SEP 14 IN DAMASCUS AND EXPECTED SOON IN CAIRO. SADAT HAS SEEN IMAM MUSA SADR AND KARAME. ACCORDING TOTAL MOHARRIR, EGYPTIANS TOLD KARAME THEY SUPPORT CEASE-FIRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE CAIRO ACCORDS AND THE BAABDA DOCUMENT, AND ARE THEMSELVES DETERMINED TO REMAIN "NEUTRAL."

4. SARKIS INAUGURATION. SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT KAMEL ASSAD PRESIDENT MEETING OF PARLIAMENTARY EXPERTS SEP 14. GROUP PLANS INAUGURAL SESSION FOR SEP 23, BUT DID NOT SET LOCATION -- TO BE DECIDED IN ANOTHER MEETING SEP 20. ASSAD SPOKE OF PRECEDENTS FOR SESSIONS OUTSIDE OF BEIRUT AND TOOK NOTE OF SYRIAN ASSURANCES THAT 25 DEPUTIES IN DAMASCUS COULD BE COUNTED ON TO ATTEND MEETING, WHICH SUGGESTS HE MAY PREFER CHTAURA LOCATION TO BEIRUT.

5. AN ARMY IN SEARCH OF A FLAG. LAA HEAXULT. AHMAD KHATIB TELLS PRESS LAA IS AT DISPOSITION OF SARKIS IN "HISTORIC TASK" OF REUNIFYING ARMY "ON NEW FOUNDATIONS." KHATIB PUBLICLY CLAIMS MEMBERS OF SYRIAN-DOMINATED "VANGUARDS" OF LEBANESE ARE NOW REJOINING LAA, BUT RIGHTIST SOURCE SAYS KHATIB IS PRIVATELY ADVISING HIS FOLLOWERS TO JOIN VANGUARDS AS HE HIMSELF PLANS TO DO SO FOLLOWING SARKIS INAUGURATION. KHATIB SAID HE WOULD NOT TALK TO SYRIANS EXCEPT ON BASIS POSITIVE DIALOGUE WHICH RESPECTS LEBANESE PEOPLE AND THEIR LAND. KHATIB SAID INQUEST GOING ON INTO RECENT "LAA
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PARTISANS" CLASH WITH OTHER LEFTISTS. BRITISH CHARGE TELLS US HE UNDERSTANDS LIBYA HAS CUT OFF FUNDS TO BOTH JUNBLATT AND THE LAA. MOVE APPEARS IN LINE WITH SYRIA/LIBYA RAPPROCHEMENT.

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

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O P 151444Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1779

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 100

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 7474

6. JUNBLATT. KAMAL JUNBLATT MET SEP 14 WITH GRAND MUFTI WHO IS DUE SEP 15 IN DAMASCUS. JUNBLATT SAID TO HAVE REITERATED HIS INSISTENCE ON NM POLITICAL REFORM PROGRAM AS ONLY BASIS FOR LEBANESE/LEBANESE DIALOGUE. JUNBLATT ALSO DISCUSSED RELATIONS BETWEEN LAA AND NM SEP 14 WITH NM CENTRAL POLITICAL COUNCIL. CONFIDENTIAL

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7. GROUND SITUATION. LOWER COMBAT LEVEL COUNTRYWIDE THOUGH SHELLINGS CONTINUE AT TRIPOLI AND IN CENTRAL MOUNTAINS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT NEWLY-FORMED CHRISTIAN "NATIONAL FRONT" IN NORTH HEADED BY TONY FRANGIE WANTS

TO LAUNCH "DECISIVE" ATTACK ON TRIPOLI BEFORE SEP 23.
CLASHES REPORTED IN HIGH METN AND AT ARAYA AND
SURROUNDING AREAS. IN BEIRUT, BATTLES IN BOURJ SQUARE
LATE SEP 14, OTHER PARTS OF COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AND IN
SUBURBS AT GALLERY SAMAAH, WHERE TANKS REPORTEDLY USED.
LIMITED BOMBARDMENTS REPORTED AT CHIAH/AIN EL-RUMMANEH,
HADETH, KFORCHIMA, CHOUEIFAT AND HAY SELLOM.

8. IN THE SOUTH. WE UNDERSTAND SYRIANS HAVE FOR
SECOND TIME ATTACKED VILLAGE OF LIBAYAH, SOUTHWEST OF
RASHIYYAH. SEP 15 ATTACK ENCOUNTERED STRONG RESISTANCE
BUT ENDED IN HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH. IRAQI-AFFILIATED
ARAB LIBERATION FORCE GROUP MAY BE REASON FOR SYRIAN
CONCERN. AL MOHARRIR SAYS SYRIANS ARE REINFORCING IN
JEZZINE AREA, AS JEZZINE FOUM SHELLING CONTINUES.
RADIO AMCHITE CLAIMS 500 ARMED IRAQIS ENTERED LEBANON
AT SIDON DURING PAST FEW DAYS. WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION.
RIGHTIST SOURCE SAYS VILLAGERS OF DARAYA AND GHARIFI
IN CHOUF HAVE COMPLAINED TO JUNBLATT ABOUT SOME 30
PALESTINIAN TECHNICIANS, ENGINEERS AND OTHER WORKERS
CLEARING VILLAGERS' LAND, INCLUDING CUTTING DOWN
TREES, AND ARE READY TO FIGHT INTRUDERS. WESTERN
MILITARY OBSERVER REPORTS REDUCED PALESTINIAN PRESENCE
IN VILLAGES OF SOUTH LEBANON AND INCREASED SHIITE
OPPOSITION TO PALESTINIANS. BORDER VILLAGES, BOTH
CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM, NOW SEEM SOLIDLY ANTI-
PALESTINIAN, EXCEPT BINT JEBEIL PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST
ENCLAVE. AS SAFIR SAYS SOME 250,000 PEOPLE HAVE BY NOW
MOVED TO SOUTH FROM BEIRUT, INCLUDING SOME 26,000 IN
TYRE DISTRICT, MOSTLY FROM TELL ZAATAR AND NABAA.

9. ISRAELI ARMS SUPPLY. WESTERN MILITARY ATTACHE
SAYS HE BELIEVES ISRAELIS HAVE GIVEN SIX SUPER SHERMAN
TANK TO RIGHTISTS. FROM OTHER SOURCES, WE UNDERSTAND
THAT THESE MAY BE DIVIDED BETWEEN NLP AND KATAEB FORCES
IN THE METN. ABOVE MILATT ALSO OBSERVED TWO SOVIET
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ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS (BTR 152) AT AIN EBEL IN
SOUTH, WHICH HE BELIEVES PROVIDED BY ISRAELIS.
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